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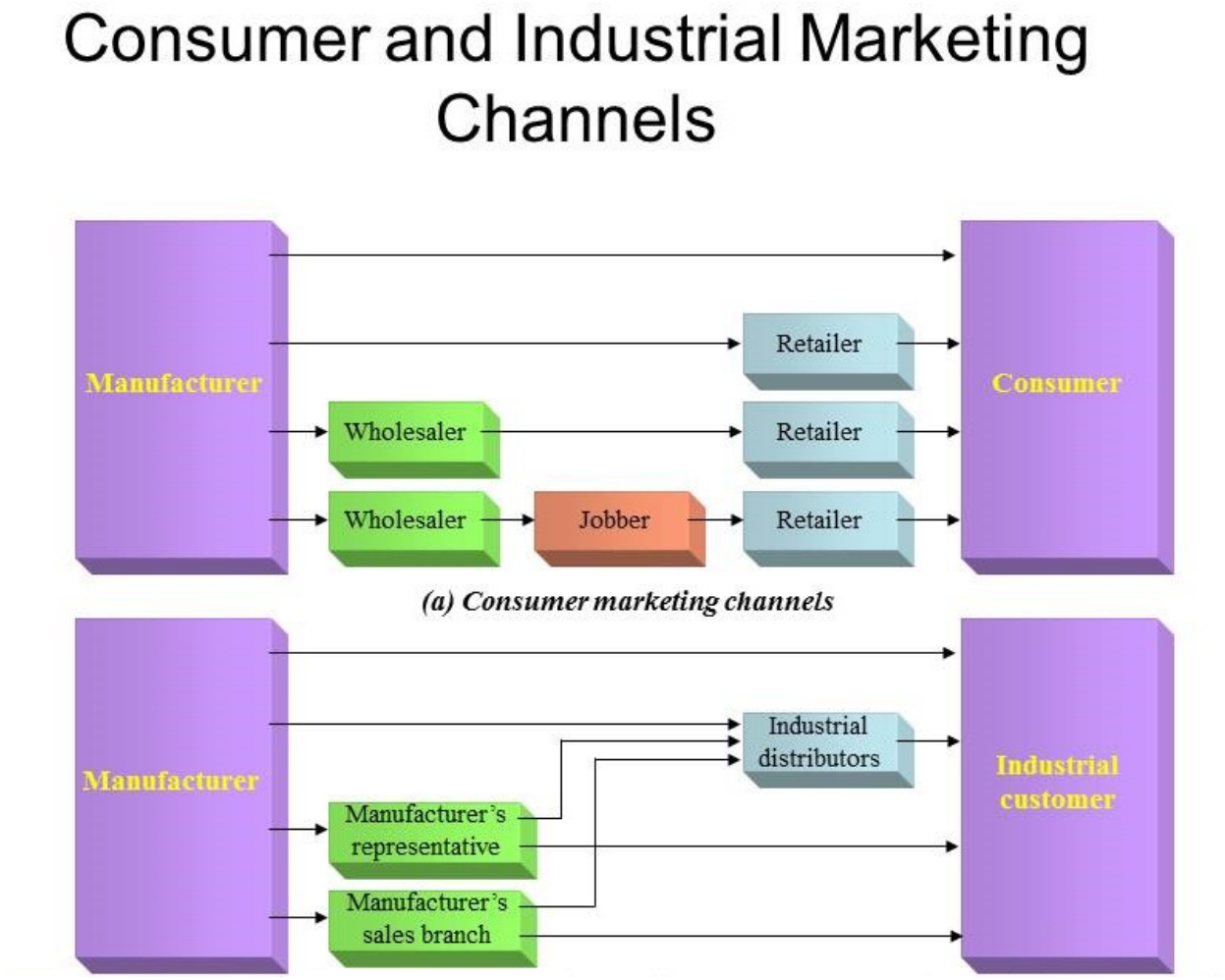
1. TOPIC OF THE RESEARCH

Determinants of Relationship Quality among Industrial Marketing Channels in India.

2. INTRODUCTION

Industrial marketing can be defined as the marketing of goods and services by one Enterprise to another. The nature of industrial marketing is such that it focuses on marketing to other business rather than individual customers. Industrial marketing happens when one business tries to sell industrial products or services to another. Industrial product or service helps to produce the product from raw material. It is a form of B2B marketing, because of the nature of what's being sold, an industrial marketing campaign requires a high level of product knowledge. When a company or a manufacturer produce goods or services it has the immediate responsibility to distribute and sell them to the industrial and institutional customers. Network or channel that helps to flow the goods from the producer to the consumer through a net of interdependent organizations intermediaries is called distribution channel or marketing channel. Industrial distribution is unique as there are several different methods of channeling the products and services to industrial consumers. The decision taken by the industry organizations on distribution channels is of great significance as the decision is involved at of long-term nature that cannot be changed frequently. The industrial organizations carry on certain important functions till the

products reach the customers like utilization the services of transportation companies for distribution, the service of warehouses for safe storage of goods, inventory control, order processing, and selection of marketing channels. . Industrial services market is expected to be valued at USD 33.6 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach USD 44.1 billion by 2025 at a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 5.6 % between 2020 and 2025.



(b) Industrial Marketing Channels

Industrial marketing provides a broader scope to business compared to B2C companies. With B2B marketing business not only can connect with other business directly but also with their customers indirectly. Industrial channels are shorter than customer channels because there are

small numbers of industrial customers and they are geographically concentrated at a few locations. Industrial products are often complex in nature and the buying process is long.

Consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention are among the most important constructs in practice today. Satisfaction refers to the degree of the overall contentment felt by the customer, resulting from the ability of the service to fulfill the customer desires, expectations and needs in relation to the service while repurchase intention refers to the individual judgement about buying again a designated service or product from the same company or seller, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances.

A successful industrial marketing is totally depends upon the relationship between the buyer and the seller. Relationship marketing is critical when service is complex, customized delivered over a continuous stream of transactions and involves many and sophisticated buyers (Crosby, Evans & Cowles, 1990). Early marketing research on the relationship between buyer and seller were focused on economic transactions which now has shifted towards behavioral interactions between the parties involved (Leonidou *et al.* 2014). In the study of relationship marketing, relationship quality emerged as a central construct (Smith, 1998).

The development of long term mutually beneficial relationship has gained the interest of both the practitioner and the academicians in the last two decades (Kumar, 1996). (Athanasapoulou, 2009) points out that when relationship quality is good, the relationship is successful and vice versa. The concept of relationship quality came into prominence in 1987 through the work of Dwyer & Oh. (1987). From 1995 a lot of research began to form around the concept of relationship quality (Athanasapoulou, 2009). This synopsis focused on relationship quality determinants and satisfaction level in industrial marketing channels.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- **Satisfaction level and repurchase intention in industrial marketing channels**

Andreasen (1977) analyzed the taxonomic of consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction measures. Government and business had become more concerned with measuring market performance in terms of consumer satisfaction and dissatisfaction. This article was concerned with the question of how one or two measure consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction. It offers taxonomy of alternative consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction measures and presents data from a national urban study of consumer complaints to evaluate for of the proposed categories. On the basis of several skills were identified and the recommendations were offered for needed improvements in these measures for future consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction research. Measures of initial non-price problems and unsatisfied known prize voiced complaints appear to be the preferred measures given our present state of knowledge. The purpose of this paper was to offer taxonomy of possible consumer satisfaction / dissatisfaction measures into present data from a recent national field study on the consequences of using alternative definitions. Especially the paper was concerned with the question of what one should measure if one wishes to improve the performance of consumer markets.

Churchill and Surprenant (1982) investigated the necessity to include the confirmation as an interceding variable affecting satisfaction. It was commonly argued for whether the effect of this confirmation was appropriately captured by expectation and recognizes performance. This study model the process for two types of products, durable and nondurable goods. This study using experimental procedures in which three levels of expectations and three levels of performance was manipulated for each product in a factorial design. Satisfaction was subsequently measured by using multiple measures for each construct. The results suggested the effects were different for the two products for the durable goods were different in important respects. The result for nondurable goods the relationship work as typically hypothesized. Satisfaction was determined solely by the performance of the durable goods. Expectations did combine with performance to

affect this confirmation. The magnitude of the disconfirmation experience did not translate into an impact on satisfaction.

Cronin and Morris (1989) investigated how the marketer's attainment of middleman expectations affect the conflict and repurchase intentions in industrial channels. The nature and key determinants of expectations in industrial buyer behavior were scrutinized. Discrepancy theory was used to evaluate the (dis)confirmation of expectations process. A chain of hypotheses were developed and tested in a large manufacturing and distribution. Network engaged in the marketing of liquid power products. The data were collected through a mail survey. Questionnaire were mailed to 247 distributors followed a pre notification letter which encouraged participation. Results suggested a direct natural effect of (dis)confirmed expectations on repurchase intentions and on conflict, and that the effect of expectations on repurchase intentions was not modified by the creation of conflict. Managerial implications were drawn.

Nagel and Cilliers (1990) analyzed the necessity to research the concept of customer satisfaction. This study aims to develop a strategic approach to measuring customer satisfaction with a particular Enterprise. The study was an attempt to (1) develop the overall concept of customer satisfaction (2) provide a detailed relationship structure for implementation within a company and (3) identify potential research areas. It was a theoretical study. The framework of the research centers on a proposed model which integrates all aspects so as to maximize the potential of the organization and all its subsystems to create and sustain satisfied customers. The basic promises of the study was that the focus should be on maximizing total product value to the customer; and the customer satisfaction of external customers is interdependent on the satisfaction of internal customers. The approach begins with a conceptualization phase in which the concept of customer satisfaction was explored. Attributes were then classified into services and this is done extended to integrate the internal customer into a total service model. In this model gap analysis was applied. Enterprise satisfaction provides the basis for extending the total service model. Positioning was applied to the customer satisfaction strategies. Operationalising of this strategy was proposed through an implementation model.

Fornell (1992) investigated national Customer Satisfaction Parameter (CSP) in Sweden. CSP estimate levels of customer satisfaction for about hundred firms in more than 30 industries from

annual survey data. Data were used as input into a multiple equation system. High level of validity and reliability were demonstrated .In a micro context, the impact of (1) customer switching barriers and (2) the relationship between customer satisfaction and company market share leads to a proposition about the level of CSP in different industries. The variance was that heterogeneity/ homogeneity of demand and supply was largely responsible for major difference in CSP across industries. The results indicate that industry selling homogeneous products to a homogeneous market or differentiated products or services to a heterogeneous market typically had higher CSP than other industries.

Rust and Zahorik (1993) provided a mathematical framework for assessing the value of customer satisfaction. The framework enables managers to determine which customer satisfaction elements had the greatest impact and how much money should be spent to improve particular customer satisfaction elements. This makes it possible to hold customer satisfaction programs accountable. Other business programs were held accountable by forcing them to demonstrate their benefits with respect to bottom line profitability. The researcher demonstrated the application of this approach in a pilot study. This study used an individual level model of loyalty and retention and then build up to market share by aggregation.

McColl- Kennedy and Schneider (2000) analyzed the challenges of researchers and business organizations to think about the measures they were using in their attempt to measure the customer satisfaction, any subsequent decision making and actions that made results. This study wants to endeavors to raise awareness of the difficulties involved in measuring customer satisfaction. The assumption associated with the measurement instruction instrument and the methods of survey together with the advantages and disadvantages of standardized versus customized instruments that explored. The paper was suggested that what we can do in terms of customer satisfaction measurement. Researcher told that we should follow these three steps for measuring customer satisfaction. (1) The procedure of measurement of customer satisfaction as no neutral act but as an intervention which affects subsequent interaction with our customers. (2) An organizations were trying to nurture relations with our customers not merely to measure and document what we had found in our research. (3) Should be prudent in use of measures and used these as yardsticks in a learning process. The researcher needs standardized and repeated measures for statistical analysis but that this may not be valued by business organizations.

Giese and Cote (2000) suggested a definitional framework of consumer satisfaction based on commonalities in the literature and the views of consumers. The researcher discussed how this framework can be used to develop a definition of satisfaction to accommodate different contextual settings. The group interview sample consisted of 135 adults consumers chosen to participate in 13 group interviews was conducted. The personal interview sample includes 23 consumers from 4 locations in two Western States. All group and personal interviews were audio taped or videotaped and transcribe. Data were recorded and analyzed and compared to extent literature to develop consumer satisfaction in terms of its components properties and dimensional ranges. Research defines consumer satisfaction in various ways. (1) Consumer satisfaction is a response; (2) the response pertains to a particular focus; (3) the response occurs at a particular time.

Kondo (2001) analyzed the customer satisfaction was the final target of Total quality Management, and many attempts had been made at its measurement. The study note that there were always plural kinds of customer viewing quality from different perspectives like the expression of no customer dissatisfaction is not necessary equal to customer satisfaction. The hypothesis testing approach was effective in the market survey of attractive quality. Employment satisfaction of intrinsic and spiritual character was the source of excellent quality and customer satisfaction. The results showed that leader and managers should respond positive and increase the employees opinion for customer satisfaction.

Stauss (2002) provided deep insights into the determinants and consequences of complaint satisfaction. The focus of this article is on the dimensional structure of this construct. Linker type scale was applied. Chi-square test was used to analyze the data. Effective analysis of complaint satisfaction data leads to the identification of two factors; cold fact complaint satisfaction and warm act complaint satisfaction. Cold fact satisfaction seems to have a stronger influence on overall complaint satisfaction and relationship satisfaction that boom act complaint satisfaction. However the influence of farming act complaint satisfaction is stronger on relationship satisfaction than on overall complaint satisfaction.

Hassan *et al.* (2015) investigated that in a highly competitive market companies need to satisfying the customer through maintaining positive relationship with their customer .The research study would explore different methods and techniques for establishing effective

Customer Relationship Management (CRM) to satisfy the customers. The motive of the study was to check the efficiency of customer relationship management to retain and satisfying customers. The study concluded that CRM is playing a major role in increasing the market share. Company makes its CRM as strong and reliable the customer will be more satisfied and retain with the company. This was a primary data based study. Data was collected through a questionnaire. It improves the Index customer knowledge and also higher customer satisfaction to improve customer Loyalty Company will also have the clear information that what were their customers, what were their needs, and what will make them more satisfied. This study showed that customer relationship management had significant effect on the customer satisfaction and both variables have positive relation. The increase in the satisfaction level will allow the customer to come again and again to use the company's products and that will increase the sales level of the company which causes the increase in organizational profit. The result of this study defines its employees training with role in providing better quality service to increase customer satisfaction.

- **Relationship Quality among Industrial Marketing Channels**

Cannon and Perreault (1999) observed that there was great increment on buyer seller relationships in business markets. The scholars specify six connectors that emphasized buyer seller relationship i.e. information exchange, cooperation, legal bonds operation linkage and relationship specific adaption by buyers and sellers. This research was based on 400 buyer seller relationship was done. This research revealed that how customer satisfaction varies across different type of relationship. It provided a new version about the nature of relationship. Based on the research, a numerical taxonomy was applied to classify different type of business relationship.

Leonidou (2005) observed that in shaping buyer behaviour and seller response. Industrial buying situation played an important role. This article concentrated on influence strategies in different buying situation applied by industrial buyers on their sellers. A survey of 122 Greek producers through a mail was sent. This integrated strategies of 24 influence was divided into six groups i.e. referent, coercive, information, legalistic, expert and reward. ANOVA test was done by

researchers in which consumer were asked to specify their degree of agreement or disagreement in 3 buying situations (new task, modify re-buy and straight re-buy). Industrial customers used a wide range of information of strategies based on expert, referent or legislated sources. These strategies differ in degree of application to buying situations. These were hardly used by new task buyers; straight re- buyers make greater use of these strategies where as modified re-buy employed information based influence strategies.

Leonidou, Palihawadana and Theodosiou (2006) investigated on the behavioural aspects of buyer seller relationships. This article was done to focus on integrated conceptual model comprising 10 behavioural constructs. 24 theories were introduced to indicate positive and negative associations of the model. The model was then tested using structural equation modeling on the basis of input received from 122 producers. These theories were then examined in which 16 were found remarkable and in the right direction, 2 were remarkable but in opposite direction where as remaining 6 were not validated. Most of the findings on the subject of previous researched were confirmed by the result. This study concludes that the behavioural aspect of this relationship can provide a more reliable constructs at work, compared with a partial one which may hide some effects of one constructs over others.

Leonidou, Talias and Leonidou (2008) conducted a study regarding the working relationship with foreign customers. The survey was conducted among 151 US export manufacturers. This survey pointed up on the sources of power exercised and how these affect trust and satisfaction. It was confirmed that power derived from forced sources reduces satisfaction and increases conflicts, whereas the unforced power sources lowers conflicts but not crucially increasing satisfaction. Conflicts were negatively associated with trust. Trust was revealed to raise commitment in the relationship. To analysis the data, Chi – square test was applied. It was concluded that the nature of power source plays an important role in raising or leaking trust and commitment in international business relationships by the moderate role of conflict and satisfaction.

Jalkala and Salminen (2009) reviewed on important marketing tools of industrial markets on customer reference. This study examined that how 6 industrial companies communicate on their website about their customer references. The specific feature of web based reference was debated and reviewed the referrals in industrial markets. The data of 165 reference description from the case company's websites were collected. This study revealed that case companies focused on describing individual products and project delivering. The company used 3 discourses of Technological expertise, Discourse of benefits and discourse of relationship commitment. The main motive of this study was to inspect how industrial suppliers communicate on their website.

Claycomb and Frankwick (2010) conducted a research on long term buyer seller relationship was being focused for several years. The current study based on interaction / network theory to test how a model interact mechanism relationship characteristics of buyer seller relationships development during the four progressive phases of it. A data of 174 member of the Institute for supply management provides surprising results that supports associative proposed in the model. During the research, the researcher was found that the patterns of these associations vary because of the relationship progress of buyer seller through the four phases of this development. Specifically: in the awareness phase, joint problem solving increases buyer uncertainty; in the exploration phase, communication quality and joint problem solving increase relationship-specific investments; and in the expansion phase, joint problem solving increases relationship-specific investments and severe conflict resolution increases buyer uncertainty. The reputation of seller also affects these relationships. The important aspects of the buyer seller relationships were information exchange and conflicts resolution.

Smirnova *et al.* (2011) investigated the role of inter functional alliance between marketing and purchasing functions in industrial companies. Inter functional alliance was considered as a measure of the partnership and internal alignment between departments in the firm, which in turn contributes to the creation of sustainable advantages by improved external partnerships and facilitating demand chain integration. The model was tested on a sample of 148 industrial companies in Russia. The sample was collected with two key respondents in each firm, the marketing perspective as well as incorporating the purchasing. Researcher used covariance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) with AMOS 7.0. After tested the dataset for normal

distribution, the results showed that marketing–purchasing collaboration moderates the effects of inter functional interaction as well as customer orientation on business performance. Alternative model testing (AMT) showed that the direct effects of these antecedent constructs on performance are non-significant in the context of Russian industrial companies.

Chakrabarty, Brown and Widing (2013) investigated the national random sample of industrial salespeople were surveyed to examine the relationships among selling behaviors, Conflicts, trust, and sales outcomes, such as performance and prediction of future interaction. Questionnaires were mailed to 3909 salespeople at their place of work. Results indicated that trust moderates the effects of selling behaviors on sales outcomes, and conflict mediates this mediating effect. While salespeople could use customer-oriented selling as a remedy for the ill effects of broken conflict on trust, customized selling only serves to enhance salesperson trust in customers. Thus, the results of the study distinguished between the roles of customer oriented. Moreover, when salespeople recognized that their sales managers are highly customer oriented and highly adaptive, they themselves become more customers oriented and more adaptive. Thus, as role models, supervisory selling behaviors contribute to salespeople's ability to grasp their trust in customers. Based on these results, the managerial implications for selling organizations were discussed.

Valtakoski (2015) revealed that the benefits of collaborative buyer seller relationships had increased with the transition from product sales to solution provision. However, the extant literature provides only little evidence on how this transition affected the crucial phase of buyer seller relationship initiation. The researcher explained that how offer intangibility and the buyer's trust in the seller interact influence this initiation. A total of 24 semi structured interviews were conducted with the personnel of the case firms as part of a large research projects. The findings indicated that the riskiness of an offer was based on its intangibility, sets a threshold level of trust that must increase the buyer seller relationship. The buyer's behaviour is influenced by mitigation strategies of the seller that was either by directly reducing the intangibility of the offer or by increasing the trust of the buyer.

Yang *et al.* (2017) investigated the using transaction cost contemporary and economics insights from the literature on relationship contracts as a Base. This survey focused on how control mechanisms (contracts and trust) affect relationship conflicts in buyer supplier relationships. The survey investigated the moderating effects of environmental uncertainty. A sample of 162 Chinese buyers was taken. Linkert type scale was applied. They showed that contracts had a U-shaped effect on destructive conflict. It gives inverted U-shaped effect on constructive conflict. Trust had a positive effect on constructive conflict and a negative effect on destructive conflict. In addition, environmental uncertainty strengthens the U-shaped effect of contracts on destructive conflict, but weakens the inverted U-shaped effect of contracts on destructive conflict and strengthens the effect of trust on both types of relationship conflict. The findings revealed the "double-edged sword" nature of contracts, especially the "dark side", and highlight the importance of trust in buyer-supplier relationships in contexts of environmental uncertainty. The findings also had important implications for buyer-supplier relationship managerial practices and management research, particularly consider the governance structure and conflict management in dynamic contexts.

4. RESEARCH GAP

After review the literature, it has been found that there have been a number of studies conducted on industrial marketing and industrial goods in abroad. In India, very few researches are conducted on the topic of relationship quality determinants among industrial marketing channels. Hence primarily, a need for research in this area has been identified.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the specific technique used to find solution for any research problem. The research methodology covers the objectives of the study, hypothesis of the study, nature of the study, scope of the study, sampling design, collection of data, statistical techniques, variables of the study, relevance of the study and organization of the study.

5.1 Objectives of the study

1. To study the framework and recent developments in industrial marketing.

2. To study the satisfaction level and repurchase intention factors in industrial marketing channels for select products.

3. To study the relationship quality determinants among industrial marketing channels members.

4. To give recommendations for increasing satisfaction and better relationship quality of industrial marketing channels.

5.2 Hypotheses of the study

Ho (1): There is no significance difference between customer awareness about cost, price, quality etc.

Ho (2): There is no significance difference between relationship quality among Industrial marketing channels.

Ho (3): Service quality is associated with relationship quality.

Ho (4): Customer satisfaction is associated with relationship quality.

Ho(5): Customer satisfaction is positively associated with service quality.

Ho(6): Relationship quality is positively associated with customer satisfaction.

Ho(7): Repurchase intention is positively associated with conflicts management.

Ho(8): Repurchase intention is positively associated with customer satisfaction.

5.3 Nature of Study: The nature of proposed research work is exploratory cum descriptive in nature.

5.4 Scope of Study: Geographical area of the research work will be confined to respondent organizations situated in Haryana and National Capital Region (NCR).

5.5 Sampling Design: To select the sample stratified random sampling will be used .The sample for the study will include approximately 400 (Nargundkar, 2003) industrial products buyer and sellers in Haryana and National Capital Region. List of industrial buyers will be taken from published industrial directories/Govt. publications. The equal number of respondents will be taken for each select product.

5.6 Collection of Data: In the proposed research both primary and secondary data will be used. The secondary data will be collected from research papers, reports, conference, websites which will provide base to this research. To collect primary data structured questionnaire will be used. The data will be collected from purchase managers/owners and other suitable personnel of the respondent organizations.

5.7 Statistical Techniques: For analyzing data, the various statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, factor analysis, regression, correlation, t-test and ANOVA etc will be used. The statistical analysis will be conducted with the help of SPSS and others relevant software.

5.8 Variables of the Study: In the proposed study; there are two types of variables named independent variables and dependent variables. Independent variables are the variables that are assumed to have direct effect on dependent variable. As found in review of literature, the satisfaction level of respondents will be studied by studying the service frequency, reliability, convenience and price variables. The repurchase intention will be studied by studying perceived quality, net benefit, service quality, and justice variables. The determinants of relationship quality will be studied by studying trust, bonding, loyalty, shared value and communication variables.

5.9 Relevance of the Study: The core contributions of many researchers over the few decades have recognized the importance of relationship in business to business markets. The present research is to study determinants about buyer seller relationship, customer satisfaction, and customer repurchases intention. In today's business to business markets, there is intense pressure to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of marketing and procurement efforts. Everywhere firms are seeking ways to perform these critical functions. The study will examine the role of relationship quality in industrial marketing and through light on the important

dimensions of relationship quality. It will also help to investigate the relationship quality among industrial marketing channels. The study will describe the magnitude by which customer intention to re purchase the product or service influenced by product quality, service quality, cost, brand preference and loyalty etc.

5.10 Organization of the Study:

The study is proposed to be organized in the following chapters:

5.10.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the theoretical overview of industrial marketing, buyer seller relationship, repurchase intention, recent developments in industrial marketing etc. will be covered.

5.10.2 Review of Literature

In this chapter, foreign and Indian studies related to topic will be reviewed to support the present study. With the help of this review research gap will be highlighted.

5.10.3 Research Methodology

This chapter explains the research process to be followed to achieve the objectives of the study. The chapter will also contain the information on all the statistical tools to be used for analysis and interpretation of data during the course of study.

5.10.4 Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter will explain the detail analysis and interpretation carried out to achieve the objectives of the study.

5.10.5 Findings and Recommendations

This chapter will summarize the major findings of the study. It will also provide some recommendations based on research findings, which is the goal of this research proposal.

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Appendices

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(with official seal)